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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 40
By Ford J

A RESOLUTION to endorse the national proclamation of National Heart Failure Awareness Week.

WHEREAS, congestive heart failure is a major U.S. public health problem that impacts five million Americans or 1.5 % of the U.S. population; and

WHEREAS, each year there are 550,000 new cases of congestive heart failure diagnosed, with 200,000 deaths and one million hospitalizations per year due to the disease; and

WHEREAS, congestive heart failure is the leading cause of hospitalization in patients over the age of 65; and

WHEREAS, congestive heart failure patients with the most severe symptoms have an approximate 50% one-year survival rate, and half of the patients with even mild disease die within five years; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of patients are not diagnosed until late in the course of the disease; and

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WHEREAS, a conservative estimate of annual U.S. health expenditures for congestive heart failure is in excess of ten billion dollars with the largest portion, eight billion dollars, of this expenditure for the cost of hospitalizations; and

WHEREAS, although current guidelines recommend that approximately 80% of heart failure patients receive ACE inhibitors in combination with beta blockers to extend life and reduce costly hospitalizations, but only 45% of patients are treated with ACE inhibitors and 20% of patients receive beta blockers; and

WHEREAS, the primary goals of "National Heart Failure Awareness Week" are (1) to promote research related to all aspects of heart failure and provide a forum for presentation of that research; (2) to educate heart failure caregivers and patients through programs, publications, and other media allowing for more effective treatment and diagnosis of heart failure; and (3) to enhance the quality and duration of life for those with heart failure; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That this General Assembly endorses the national proclamation of National Heart Failure Awareness Week.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Commissioner of the Department of Health of the state of Tennessee transmit the treatment guidelines for congestive heart failure published by the Heart Failure Society of America, Inc. to the appropriate health care professionals in the state while urging their adoption of these guidelines in their practice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That physicians and payors should be encouraged to administer and provide reimbursement for echocardiograms to all patients over 50 years of age with a history of heart disease and begin appropriate treatment as soon as possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That physicians and payors should be encouraged to prescribe or provide reimbursement for the standard of care for congestive heart failure,

including FDA-approved beta blockers and ACE inhibitors as well as other therapies that have been shown to reduce the mortality and morbidity associated with congestive heart failure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this General Assembly endorses the inclusion of the latest treatment advances for congestive heart failure, including ACE inhibitor and beta blocker therapies in the curricula of medical schools located in the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.